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	INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE PRIORITY DATE CLAIM October 24, 1999 PRIORITY DATE CLAIM October 24, 1998								
	TITLE OF INVENTION An Actuator Assembly								
	APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/	US Eric Colin							
	Y 1.	bmission of items or SUBSEQUEN or SUBSEQUEN to equest to promptly ected by the expiral emational Applic and here of require to communicated liquired, as the applicate the end of the claims of the hed hereto (requiren communicated to been made; how the been made; how the made and age translation or artition of the investigate translation or	concerning a filing under T submission of items or begin national examination of 19 months from the cation as filed (35 U.S.C and only if not community by the International Bur blication was filed in the file International App International App International App International App International App International App International Bur wever, the time limit for will not be made. If the amendments to the intor(s) (35 U.S.C. 3716/ If the annexes to the Internations to the Intor(s) (35 U.S.C. 3716/ If the annexes to the Internations Internations International Bur International Bur	35 U.S.C. 371. tecerning a filing unde on procedures (35 U. te priority date (PCT 2: 371(c)(2)) cated by the Interneau. 2 United States Reclication as filed (35 on under PCT Artic incitated by the Interneau. 2 United States Reclication as filed (35 on under PCT Artic incitated by the Interneau. 3 making such amen e claims under PCC (4(4)).	S.C. 371(f)). 'Article 31). national Bureau). ceiving Office (RO/US). 5 U.S.C. 371(e)(2)). cle 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(e)(3))				
So. ∀	PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)). Items 11 to 16 below concern document(s) or information included: 11.								
¥	A FIRST preliminary amendment. A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.								
	14. A substitute specification.								
	15. A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.								
	16. Other items or information: CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAIL I hereby certify that the enclosed Documents are being deposited with the United States Postal Service as Express Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee," mailing label No. EL668817560US, and addressed to Box, PGT. Assistant Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington D.C. 20231 on this 23rd, day of April, 2001.								
	Theresa M. Palmateer								
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BASIC NATION	AL FEE (37 CFR 1.49	2 (a) (1) - (5)) :					
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	Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27. The fees indicated above are reduced by 1/2.						
		SUB	TOTAL =	\$ 1,000.00			
Processing fee of months from the	\$130.00 for furnishing earliest claimed priority	the English translation later than date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).	20 30	s			
-	months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)). + TOTAL NATIONAL FEE = \$ 1,000.00						
Fee for recording accompanied by	Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property +						
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NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.							
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60130-1064

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:

Eric Colin

Serial No.:

Unknown

Filed:

Herewith

Priority

PCT/IB99/01748 GB 98 23220.0 Filed: October 21, 1999 Filed: October 24, 1998

Group Art Unit:

Unknown

Examiner:

Unknown

Title:

AN ACTUATOR ASSEMBLY

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner of Patents Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Please amend the application in the following particulars prior to Examination.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, before the first paragraph, please insert the following section heading:

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Page 1, before the second paragraph, please insert the following section heading:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Page 2, before the paragraph reading "The invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the drawings in which;", please insert the following section heading:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Page 2, please replace the paragraph after the paragraph reading "The invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the drawings in which;":

Figure 1 is an isometric view of a top side of the present invention;

Figure 2 is an isometric view of a back side of the present invention; and

Figure 3 is an isometric view of a bottom side of the present invention.

Page 2, before the paragraph beginning with the words "With reference to figures 1-3 there is...", please insert the following section heading:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Please insert the following paragraph at the end of page 4.

The foregoing description is only exemplary of the principles of the invention. Many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light of the above teachings. The preferred embodiments of this invention have been disclosed, however, so that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that certain modifications would come within the scope of this invention. It is, therefore, to be understood that within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specially described. For that reason the following claims should be studied to determine the true scope and content of this invention.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Page 5, before the first claim, please insert the claims section heading

-- What is claimed is:--

A marked up version of the below amended claims is included in attached Appendix A:

- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 1 in which the pivot axis
 passes through the body portion.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 1 in which the pivot axis is proximate that end of the motor remote from the pinion.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 1 in which the gear rack includes at least one stop to limit movement of the rack relative to the body portion.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 4 in which each stop engages the drive shaft.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 5 in which each stop engages a
 portion of the drive shaft on the side of the pinion remote from the motor.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 4 in which the drive shaft passes between the array of gear teeth and a guide portion proximate the gear teeth.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 7 in which the guide portion is supported by each stop.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 1 which further includes a
 housing in which the motor is secured.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 9 in which the pivot is mounted on the housing.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 9 in which the pivot includes a
 boss of the gear rack to which in use a lever is attached.

- 12. (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 11 in which the boss at least partially projects through the housing.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 9 in which the drive shaft engages the housing.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in any one of Claim 9 in which the housing is substantially sealed.
- 15. (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in any one of Claims 9 in which the housing has at least a first and second part, the parts having co-operating cut-outs to provide for at least one end of the drive shaft.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 1 in which the pivot is mounted on the body portion.
- (Amended) The actuator assembly as recited in Claim 17 in which the motor is an electric motor.
 - 19. Please cancel Claim 19.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please insert the following heading and paragraph after the claims.

ABSTRACT

An actuator assembly including a motor having a body portion and a drive shaft, the drive shaft being drivable connected to a pinion, the pinion drivingly engaging an array of gear teeth of a gear rack the array of gear teeth having a first side adjacent the motor, in which the gear rack is pivotally mounted via a pivot about a pivot axis on the first side of the array of gear teeth

REMARKS

Applicant has amended this application to add section hearings and delete multiple dependences in the claims. Applicant respectfully requests examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

CARLSON, GASKEY & OLDS, P.C.

John M. Siragusa

Registration No. 46,174 Attorneys for Applicant

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Dated: April 23, 2001

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APPENDIX A

Version with markings to show changes made

- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 1 in which
 the pivot axis passes through the body portion.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 1 [or 2] in which
 the pivot axis is proximate that end of the motor remote from the pinion.
- 4. (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in [any proceeding] [c]Claim 1 in which the gear rack includes at least one stop to limit movement of the rack relative to the body portion.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 4 in which [the
 or] each stop engages the drive shaft.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 5 in which [the
 or] each stop engages a portion of the drive shaft on the side of the pinion remote from the motor.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in [any preceding claim]
 Claim 4 in which the drive shaft passes between the array of gear teeth and a guide portion proximate the gear teeth.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 7 [when dependent on any one of Claim 4-6] in which the guide portion is supported by [the or] each stop.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in [any preceding claim]
 Claim 1 which further includes a housing in which the motor is secured.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 9 in which the pivot is mounted on the housing.

- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 9 [or 10] in which the pivot includes a boss of the gear rack to which in use a lever is attached.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in Claim 11 in which the boss at least partially projects through the housing.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in [any one of] Claim 9[in which the drive shaft engages the housing.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in any one of Claim 9[-13] in which the housing is substantially sealed.
- 15. (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in any one of Claims 9[-14] in which the housing has at least a first and second part, the parts having co-operating cut-outs to provide for at least one end of the drive shaft.
- 16. (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in [any one of Claims 1-9 or 11-15 when dependent upon Claim 9] Claim.1 in which the pivot is mounted on the body portion.
- (Amended) [An] The actuator assembly as [defined] recited in [any preceding claim]
 Claim 17 in which the motor is an electric motor.

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AN ACTUATOR ASSEMBLY

The present invention relates to actuator assemblies and in particular electrical actuators used to actuate components, for example door locks, door latches or door deadlocks in vehicles.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a compact actuator assembly. It is a further object to provide an actuator assembly that is easy to install. It is a further object to provide an actuator assembly that has relatively few components and is relatively cheap to produce.

Thus according to the present invention there is provided an actuator assembly including a motor having a body portion and a drive shaft, the drive shaft being drivably connected to a pinion, the pinion drivingly engaging an array of gear teeth of a gear rack the array of gear teeth having a first side adjacent the motor, in which the gear rack is pivotally mounted via a pivot about a pivot axis on said first side of the array of gear teeth.

Preferably the pivot axis passes through the body and/or is proximate that end of the motor remote from the pinion.

Preferably the gear rack includes at least one stop to limit movement of the rack relative to the body portion and preferably the drive shaft passes between the array of gear teeth and a guide portion proximate the gear teeth. 2

Preferably each stop supports the guide portion.

According to a further aspect of the invention there is provided an actuator assembly including a motor having a body portion and a drive shaft, the drive shaft being drivably connected to a pinion, the pinion drivingly engaging an array of gear teeth of a gear rack with the gear rack being mounted for movement on the body portion.

Preferably the motor is an electric motor.

The invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the drawings in which;-

Figures 1.2 and 3 are different isometric views of an actuator assembly according to the present invention.

With reference to figures 1-3 there is shown an actuator assembly 10 which includes a motor 12 (in this case an electric motor). The motor includes a body portion 14 and a drive shaft 16. The drive shaft is drivably connected to a pinion 18. The pinion 18 drivingly engages an array of gear teeth 20 fixed to a gear rack 22.

The gear rack is of generally octant shape with the array of gear teeth 20 being arranged in an arcuate manner. The array of gear teeth have a first side 21 adjacent the motor. The gear rack includes a boss 24 which fits into a hole (not shown) of a housing (not shown) to provide a pivot. Gear rack 22 thus can rotate about axis 25A of boss 24. It should be noted that axis 25A passes through body portion 14.

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The housing substantially surrounds the motor and gear rack and can be substantially sealed against the ingress of contaminants eg. dirt, dust, or water. The motor is secured in the housing, preferably by engagement of each end of the drive shaft with the housing.

Preferably the housing is of at least two part form, a first part having two cut-outs each cut-out accepting and supporting one end of the drive shaft, the second part having complementary cut-outs which in conjunction with the cut-outs of the first part provide a journal bearing for each end of the drive shaft 16. The second part also has a hole to accept and provide a journal for boss 24

In use the boss is connected to a lever situated on the outside of the housing, the lever being connected to the component to be actuated.

Extending beyond the gear teeth 20 there are two stops 26 and 28 which limit movement of the gear rack relative to the body portion 14 by engagement with the drive shaft 16. Figure 1 shows the gear rack 22 at an extreme position wherein stop 28 has engaged drive shaft 16. Figure 1 also shows (in chain dotted line) the other extreme of movement of the gear rack relative to the body portion wherein stop 26 has engaged drive shaft 16.

Guide portion 30 connects stops 26 and 28, resulting in a stronger arrangement. Guide portion 30 is mounted on the opposite side of shaft 16 to the array of gear teeth 20. Guide portion 30 includes a guide surface 32 along which the drive shaft 16 passes in close proximity or alternatively in light engagement therewith. When the motor 12 is producing torque the engagement of the pinion with appropriate gear teeth of the array causes a separating force which preferably can be counteracted by the guide surface 32

acting upon the drive shaft 16, thus reducing the load as seen by the pivot 25.

In use operation of the motor in a first rotational direction causes the pinion to move the gear rack to a first position and operation of the motor in a second rotational direction causes the pinion to move the gear rack to a second position.

In further embodiments the gear rack can be of an alternative segment shape such as a quadrant or a sextant and in yet further embodiments the gear rack need not be of a segment shape.

The invention provides for a particularly compact arrangement since a substantial part of the gear rack can be arranged to lie alongside the motor. Furthermore the actuator assembly is axially compact, it being noted that no part of the gear rack projects beyond that end of the drive shaft having the pinion secured thereto. It should also be noted that the actuator shown in the figures only has two moving parts namely the drive shaft/pinion and the gear rack.

CLAIMS

- 1. An actuator assembly including a motor having a body portion and a drive shaft, the drive shaft being drivably connected to a pinion, the pinion drivingly engaging an array of gear teeth of a gear rack the array of gear teeth having a first side adjacent the motor, in which the gear rack is pivotally mounted via a pivot about a pivot axis on said first side of the array of gear teeth.
- An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 1 in which the pivot axis passes through the body portion.
- An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 1 or 2 in which the
 pivot axis is proximate that end of the motor remote from the pinion.
- 4. An actuator assembly as defined in any preceding claim in which the gear rack includes at least one stop to limit movement of the rack relative to the body portion.
- An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 4 in which the or each stop engages the drive shaft.
- An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 5 in which the or each stop engages a portion of the drive shaft on the side of the pinion remote from the motor.
- 7. An actuator assembly as defined in any preceding claim in which the drive shaft passes between the array of gear teeth and a guide portion proximate the gear teeth.

- An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 7 when dependent on any one of Claim 4-6 in which the guide portion is supported by the or each stop.
- An actuator assembly as defined in any preceding claim which further includes a housing in which the motor is secured.
- 10. An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 9 in which the pivot is mounted on the housing.
- 11. An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 9 or 10 in which the pivot includes a boss of the gear rack to which in use a lever is attached.
- An actuator assembly as defined in Claim 11 in which the boss at least partially projects through the housing.
- An actuator assembly as defined in any one of Claims 9-12 in which the drive shaft engages the housing.
- An actuator assembly as defined in any one of Claims 9-13 in which the housing is substantially sealed.
- 15. An actuator assembly as defined in any one of Claims 9-14 in which the housing has at least a first and second part, the parts having cooperating cut-outs to provide for at least one end of the drive shaft.
- 16. An actuator assembly as defined in any one of Claims 1-9 or 11-15 when dependent upon Claim 9 in which the pivot is mounted on the body portion.

- 17. An actuator assembly including a motor having a body portion and a drive shaft, the drive shaft being drivably connected to a pinion, the pinion drivingly engaging an array of gear teeth of a gear rack with the gear rack being mounted for movement on the body portion.
- 18. An actuator assembly as defined in any preceding claim in which the motor is an electric motor.
- An actuator assembly as herein before described with reference to or as shown in figures 1-3 of the accompanying drawings.



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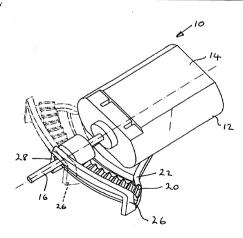


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		(11) International Publication Number: WO 00/24995		
E05B 47/00, 65/36, H02K 7/06	A1	(43) International Publication Date: 4 May 2000 (04.05.00)		
(21) International Application Number: PCT/IB9 (22) International Filing Date: 21 October 1999 (2		CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC,		
(30) Priority Data: 9823220.0 24 October 1998 (24.10.98) GB		Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.		
 Applicant (for all designated States except US): ME LIGHT VEHICLE SYSTEMS – FRANCE [FR/FI route d'Orléans, B.P. 48, F-45600 Sully-sur-Loire 				
(72) Inventor; and (75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): COLIN, Eric [FR/nue des Bosquets, F-54300 Luneville (FR).	/FR];	s,		
(74) Agents: JONES, John, Bryn et al.; Withers & Rogers, C House, 2 Hays Lane, London SEI 2HW (GB).	Goldin	is .		

(54) Title: AN ACTUATOR ASSEMBLY

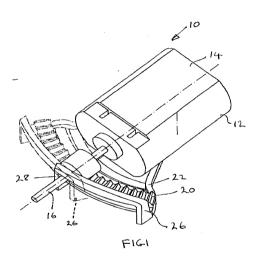
(57) Abstract

An actuator assembly (10) including a motor (1) having a body portion (14) and a drive shaft (16), the drive shaft being drivably connected to a pinion (18), the pinion drivingly engaging an array of gear teeth (20) of a gear rack (22) the array of gear teeth having a first side (21) adjacent the motor, in which the gear rack is pivotally mounted via a pivot about a pivot axis (25A) on said first side (21) of the array of gear teeth (20).



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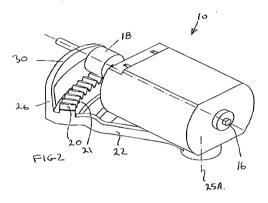
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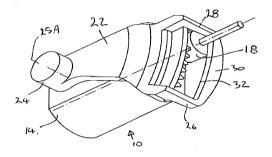


FIG3

PTC/S8/01 (10-00)
Approved for use through 10/51/2002, OMB 0651-0032

Eric Colin

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April 23, 2001

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PATENT APPLICATION (37 CFR 1.63)

OR

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Submitted

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[Page 1 of 2]

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REGISTERED PRACTITIONER INFORMATION (Supplemental Sheet)

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Name	Registration Number	Name	Registration Number		
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Theodore W. Olds	33,080		1		
John E. Carlson	37,794				
David J. Gaskey	37,139		i		
Kerrie A. Laba	42,777		1		
William S. Gottschalk	44,130		l		
David L. Wisz	46,350				
Karin H. Butchko	45,864		1		
John M. Siragusa Anthony P. Cho	46,174 47,209				
Anna M. Shih	36,372				
Allie M. Ollin	30,372				
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Suite 350	Address Suite 350					
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I hereby declare that all statements mad are believed to be true; and further tha made are punishable by fine or imprisor validity of the application or any patent is	hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own irrowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these searches were weet the search of the statements and the tile as a statement of the like as a statement and that a dark whilf false statements may jeopardize the					
NAME OF SOLE OR FIRST INV	ENTOR:			A petiti	on has been f	led for this unsigned inventor
Given Name Eric Family Name Colin or Surname						
(irreat and middlo (ir any)) Inventor's Signature Date M/10/1001						
Residence: City Luncville			State	Country France		France Citizenship
Mailing Address 5 Rue Des Bosquets	S.P. Dan Banguari					
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NAME OF SECOND INVENTOR: A petition has been filed for this unsigned inventor						
				Family Name or Surname		
Inventor's Signature Date						
Residence: City State					Country	Citizenship
Mailing Address						
Malling Address						
City	State			ZIP		Country
Additional inventors are being named on thesupplemental Additional Inventor(s) sheet(s) PTO/SB/02A attached hereto.						